THE EARL OF ESSEX IN ELIZABETHAN LITERATURE

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE BOARD OF UNIVERSITY STUDIES OF THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY IN CONFORMITY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

1928

BY

RAY HEFFNER

BALTIMORE

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CONTENTS

Chronological list of the principal events in the Life of Essex

CHAPTER I. Spenser's Sir Artegall

II. Essex, the Ideal Courtier (printed within)

III. Essex Allusions and Dedications, 1588-1599

IV. Shakespeare's *Richard II* (printed in PLMA 45, September, 1930, pp. 754-780, under the title " Shakespeare, Hayward, and Essex.")

V. Shakespeare and Essex: Works at large

VI. *Troilus and Cressida*

VII. Essex's Great Fall

Conclusion (printed below)

Appendix I: Essex's Writings

Appendix II: Accounts of the Cadiz Expedition

Bibliography

CONCLUSION

I have presented a literary history of the Earl of Essex, his contact with the literature of his own day as a writer, a subject, and a patron of literature. From his introduction at court, his great popularity and courtly accomplishments made him the subject of many poems and pastorals; he took the place of Sidney as the chief " shepherd of the New Arcadia." His own interest in learning led him to cultivate the friendship of scholars and poets, and many of these enjoyed his almost unbounded generosity while he was in favour. His followers and admirers were many, and chief among these as a literary figure was Edmund Spenser, who celebrated the martial powers and progressive policies of Essex in the Fifth Book of his

Faerie Queene and in his *Protholamion*, and in the Sixth Book of his epic gave a picture of the ideal courtier which seems to have in many aspects been modeled on his patron, Lord Essex.

Although Spenser, Peele, Harvey, Daniel, Chapman, Barnes, and many others celebrated Essex in their works as the courtier, the warrior, the leader of the Progressives, Shakespeare seems to have been of the opposite faction. The performance of his *Richard II* on February 7, 1601, does not indicate any friendship for Essex, but the fact that the poet and his company were excused rather indicates that he was considered by the authorities as safe—of the opposite faction, the party of the Lord Chamberlain. Moreover, an examination of the principles set forth in his works shows not one point of contact with any of the outstanding policies of Essex. His *Troilus* seems to be a reflection of the events that led up to the fall of Essex, but the attitude toward the popular Earl is decidedly an unfavourable one. Shakespeare presents Essex as the malcontent, the disgruntled leader, whose opposition to constituted authority greatly endangered the state and destroyed respect for established institutions. His sympathy is with the government—the Cecil faction—and his point of view here, as elsewhere, is that of the conservative.

This study, then, shows a very close relation between literature and life, for Essex through his interest in and patronage of literary men and through his magnificent career and dramatic fall was the inspiration of much occasional and some great literature.

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ESSEX, THE IDEAL COURTIER

By Ray Heffner

No figure in Elizabethan history is so thoroughly misunderstood today as that "Magnifique Lord," Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex. A few rash acts recorded in school histories and encyclopedias have determined the whole conception of the man. But those characteristics which made him alike the idol of Queen and people, as well as the hope of the "forward school" and of scholars and poets, have somehow been overlooked, and that splendid character is now card-catalogued by graduate students and writers of "learned" articles as "that rash Earl." No classification was ever further from the truth—the whole truth.

To his contemporaries Essex was the Knight of Courtesy and took Sidney's place as the Ideal Courtier, or as Spenser described him, "Faire branch of Honor, flower of Cheualrie." But our moderns do not agree with Spenser. Mr. F. I. Carpenter has the following comment on Mr. Percy Long's identification of Spenser's Sir Calidore as Essex: "Makes out a plausible case; but what about Essex as the protagonist of Courtesy?"[1] By this question Mr. Carpenter implies that Essex was not the protagonist of courtesy and cannot be considered as such. This misconception is repeated in Mr. Kenneth Thorpe Rowe's recent article, "Sir Calidore: Essex or Sidney,"[2] in which he sums up his characterization of Essex thus:

> But he had not courtesy—there's the rub. Although possessed of "the most singular delicacy and generosity to his inferiors, and with carriage courtly, grave and exceedingly comely," he was also called the "impetuous Essex," full of vehement and unrestrained passion, who never learned to disguise a feeling, or conceal a thought. In fact Essex was almost as noted for rudeness as Sidney was for courtesy.[3]

Courtesy, we should remember, was to the Elizabethan

[1] *Reference Guide to Edmund Spenser*, p. 159.
[2] *Studies in Philology* 28. 125-141.
[3] P. 140.

synonymous with *courtiership*.[3a] The courteous knight was, therefore, the courtier, and politeness (the modern meaning of *courtesy*) was only one of his qualities. So, when Mr. Carpenter objects to Essex as the protagonist of courtesy, he implies that he was not regarded by his contemporaries as a model courtier. It is my purpose in this paper, then, to show that in his own day the Earl was celebrated as a model courtier and, therefore, the protagonist of courtesy.

Politeness

Politeness was, however, one of the characteristics of the ideal courtier, and, likewise, one of Essex's. If one is not inclined to depend on the *Encyclopedia Britannica* or the *DNB* for historical and biographical information, he will find in the documents and literature of the period ample testimony to demonstrate that Essex was endowed with the virtue of courtesy, or politeness. Sir Robert Naunton uses the word *courteous* in its double sense when he describes the young Earl thus: "There was in this young Lord, together with a kind of urbanity or *innate courtesy* which both won the Queen, and too, much took upon the people."[4] Likewise, in a report of a visit to England (1596) of Signor Francesco Gardenigo to the Venetian Ambassador, we are told that "The Earl is a great favourite of the Queen; he is about twenty-six years of age, tall, but wiry. . . . He is a right modest, *courteous*, and humane gentleman."[5] Even his greatest enemies regarded him as a very courteous knight. Spanish opinion of him is reported thus: "They do not believe that Essex wrote it [the *Apology*], for the Earl is too *courteous* a knight to write such slander."[6] Sir Henry Wotton, friend of Essex, says of him and Buckingham: "They were both fair spoken men, not prone and eager to detract openly from any man; and in this the Earl hath been most falsely blemished in our vulgar story."[7]

[3a] See A. C. Judson's excellent article, "Spenser's Theory of Courtesy," *PMLA* 47. 122-136.

[4] *Fragmentalia Regalia*, Arber's *English Reprints* (1870), p. 51. Italics mine.

[5] *CSP, Venetian*, 1592-1603, p. 238. Report enclosed in letter from P. Duodo to the Doge and Senate, 2 Nov. 1596. Italics mine.

[6] *CSP, Dom.*, 1598-1601, p. 203, "J. B. to Peter Halins," 10 June, 1599.

[7] *Reliquiae Wottonianae* (London, 1685), pp. 174-5.

Thomas Fuller, a near contemporary, writes of him:

Robert Devereux. . . .

He was such a master-piece of Court and Camp, and so bright a Light therein, that we will observe his morning, fore-noon, high-noon, afternoon and night.

His morning began at his first coming to court, the gates whereof he entered with four great advantages of *pitie, kindred, favour* and *mirit*: . . . *Merit*, being of a Beautiful Personage, courteous nature, noble descent, fair (though much impaired) fortune. . . .

He was valiant, liberall to scholars and souldiers, nothing distrustful, if not too confident of fidelity in others. Revengefulness was not bred but put into his disposition: Tis hard to say, whether such as were his Enemies, or such as should be his friends, did him more mischief. When one flattered him to his face for his Valour, *no* said he, *my sins ever made me a coward.* In a word, his failings were neither so foul, nor so many, but that the character of a right worthy man most justly belongs to his memory.[8]

It is quite evident, then, that by his contemporaries Essex was considered a courteous man—a polite man. Moreover, his own actions prove him to be considerate of others. His attachment to his friends was notorious. His handsome gifts to men like Bacon and his ready and whole-souled championship of their causes were characteristic of the man. His devotion to Don Antonio and his fostering of Antonio Perez, as well as his passionate support of Henry Bourbon and the Huguenots, evidence his readiness to support any unfortunate who appealed to him for aid in a just cause. His championship of Davison, the Queen's secretary, who was made to bear the blame for the execution of Mary Stuart, is only one outstanding example from a thousand others.

His fairness toward his enemies, likewise, was a noted characteristic. After his duel with Blount, the two became fast friends. A more marked example, however, is his conduct toward his two most persistent enemies, Sir Robert Cecil and Sir Walter Raleigh. In 1597, Cecil wanted to go to France on a diplomatic mission, but he feared to leave Essex unrestrained at court. Before going, therefore, he secured the Earl's promise not to do anything contrary to his interests at court. Despite the fact that Cecil was his chief rival and that during his absence he could have gained innumerable advantages, Essex kept that

[8] *The Worthies of England* (1662), "Hereford-Shire," pp. 38-9.

promise. During the " Islands Voyage " Raleigh deliberately disobeyed orders and landed his forces. Although Essex was Commander of the expedition and could easily have caused Raleigh trouble both at sea and at home, he agreed to pass over the offence and to receive an apology. Camden remarks concerning this incident: " For Essex being a man of most milde nature, slow to take offense, and apt to lay down his displeasures, forgave old enmities, which were now wearing out, for the common-wealths sake." [9] Although his former friend and recipient of numberless favours of the Earl, Francis Bacon was one of Essex's chief prosecutors in his trial in 1600. But Lord Essex could " not find it in his heart " to censure Bacon, and accepted his former friend's offer of his services after the trial. To repeat Thomas Fuller, then, Essex was " nothing distrustful, if not too confident of fidelity in others. Revengefulness was not bred but *put* into his disposition."

Chivalry

The ideals and practices of chivalry were considered a part of the makeup of every courtier. The ceremonies of Elizabeth's coronation were concluded by a tournament, in which all the participants were noblemen of the court. This tournament was the first of a long series, which took place annually as the principal event on Coronation Day, November 17. " It was on this day," says E. K. Chambers, " that the tilt-yard of Westminister blazed with pageantry and rang with the spears of the manhood of England, gathered under the leadership of Sir Henry Lee to do honour to the Virgin Queen." [10] As early as 1581, Lee established himself as " Knight of the Crown " in the annual tilt.[11] Lee was not the only person, however, to win favour on the tilt yard. Even in the time of Henry VIII, the tournament had its value as a part of the courtly training of a gentleman. Like her father, Elizabeth, by her " delight in the strength of a man and a horse," made it possible for aspiring youths to win their way to court favour by proficiency at tilt, as well as in the mask.

[9] *Annales* (ed., 1635), p. 473.

[10] *Eliz. Stage* 1. 18.

[11] The date of the first of the annual tilts is uncertain. Segar stated that they originated at Elizabeth's Coronation. But Chambers is sure only that they existed as early as 1571.

So there is little cause for wonder that Coronation Day was kept as a solemn celebration, and, during the later years, almost took rank as a ceremony of state.[12]

My Lord of Essex early distinguished himself at tilt. In 1585, while he was with Leicester in the Low Countries, he so conducted himself in a tournament held by the Lord Governor that he " led all men to have high hopes of his future greatness," [13] and on Coronation Day in 1590, he appeared in the tournament at which Sir Henry Lee resigned his post of challenger to the Earl of Cumberland, who took the name of the Knight of Pendragon Castle.[14] Cumberland, however, was overshadowed by the young Earl of Essex, who gave the final touch of flattery to the tournament on Coronation Day by appearing in his collar of SS, " a thing unwonted," except on days of solemn ceremony.[15]

In 1590, at a tournament held at Windsor on Saint Elizabeth's day the Earl of Cumberland, the Earl of Essex, and Lord Burge challenged all comers, six courses apiece. Essex's part in this tournament is celebrated in a ballad on his death:

> At Tilt he did surpasse
> *Gallantly, gallantly*
> All men that is and was
> Evermore still.
> One day, as it was seene
> In honour of our Queene
> Such deeds hath nere bin seene
> As he did doe.[16]

In 1592, Essex and the Earl of Cumberland again appeared together as champions of the Queen. Philip Gawdy records that

> Vppon the Coronation Day at nyght ther cam two knights armed vpp into the pryvy chamber videlicet my L. of Essex and my L. of Cumberland and ther made a challenge that vppon XXVjth of ffebruary next they will run with all comers to mayntayn that ther M. is most worthiest and most fayrest Amadis de Guale.[17]

[12] *Eliz. Stage* 1. 17.

[13] Holinshed's *Chronicles* (Lond., 1587) 1. 1433-4; quoted by Devereux, *Lives of the Devereux, Earls of Essex* 1. 180.

[14] This is the tournament which is described in Peele's *Polyhymnia.* His account of Essex at this time is quoted *infra.*

[15] Birch, *Eliz.* 1. 92. Quoted by Chambers 1. 18.

[16] *Roxburghe Ballads* 1. 565. " A Lamentable Ditty," etc.; cf. editor's note.

[17] *Letters of Philip Gawdy* (1579-1616), ed. I. H. Jeayes, 1906 (Roxburghe Club), p. 67. Quoted by Chambers 1. 145 (note).

In 1595, my Lord of Essex presented his device of " the Hermit, the Secretary, and the Soldier." Peele describes it in his *Anglorum Feriae:*

> The first that led, in cheerful colours clad,
> In innocent white and fair carnation,
> Was he whose wisdom in his younger years
> And love to arms made him so far renown'd,
> The noble earl of Essex and of Ewe.
> His mute approach and action of his mutes
> Said that he was solicited diversely;
> One way to follow war and war's designs,—
> And well he may, for skill he can full well
> Of War's adventures, 'larms and stratagems;—
> Another way t' apply him to the care
> Of commonweal—affairs, . . .
>
> His senate-robes shall beautify his arms,
> *His chivalry nobilitate his name.*[18]

In an anonymous ballad, *Elegy on the E[arl] of Essex,* his prowess at tilt is further celebrated:

> when tilt and barriers force were seene,
> sweet Deuorax still great honor wonn;
> for Courtiers weale and Englands queene,
> ther were no dangers he would shun. . . .[19]

As a matter of fact, Essex's part in the Queen's Day Celebration was such an important item that his friends despaired of his reconciliation with the Queen after his quarrel in 1598 only when he failed to appear at the celebration of that year.

Essex's chivalry was not confined to the tournament: it was a part of his very nature. In the expedition with Drake and Norris to Portugal in 1589, before leaving Lisbon, Essex thrust his pike into the gate of the town, " demanding aloud if any Spaniard mewed therein durst venture forth in favour of his mistress to break a lance. ' But those gallants thought it safer to court their ladies with amourous discourses than to have

[18] *Anglorum Feriae, Englandes Hollydayes, celebrated the 17th of Novemb. last, 1595, beginninge happly the 38 yeare of the raigne of our soveraigne ladie Queene Elizabeth. By George Peele Mr of Arte in Oxforde.* Reprinted in Bullen's ed. of Peele's Works 2. 338 ff. Quotation from Bullen, lines 190-209. Italics mine.

This work of Peele, although not printed in his lifetime, shows well the importance attached to the Coronation Day Celebration.

[19] *Ballads from MSS* 2. 248.

their loves written on their breasts with the point of his English spear.'" [20] This exploit was widely celebrated and did much to make Essex the popular hero that he was. Richard Williams in his *Life and Death of Essex* recounts it:

> That Portingale can witnesse well,
> and Don anthonie, then there kinge;
> Where haughtie valor did excell,
> That man in his estate to bringe.
> At lisborne gates this challenged hee,
> "The prowdest within, come forthe to me!"
>
> But when hee sawe it was [in] vayne,
> He stucke his Dagger on the gate,
> Whereon he honge his golden chayne,
> as skornynge the prowdest made:
> "This shall be token that I bringe
> To you your trewe anoynted kinge." [21]

And in the *Elegy on the Earl of Essex:*

> when as at Lisbon he ariud,
> such haughty prowess he did show,
> when at their gate his feet he draue,
> which strook amasement to his foe:
> Which strook amasement to his foe:
> During their prowess to prove in fight,
> Anthonio was their king by right.
>
> "open your gates, therefore," quoth he,
> and entertaine with Joy your king,
> your former faults forgotten be;
> . . . . . .
> drawing his poniard from his side,
> whereon a silken scarfe he tide.
>
> And on their gate he lefte the same,
> returning to his Company:
> which deeds he eternized by fame
> for noble acts of Cheualry.
> Spaine, france and portingall did feele
> his fauchions force of tempred steele.[22]

Richard Niccols includes Essex's challenge in his account of the glories of Elizabeth's reign:

[20] Quoted by Devereux 1. 203-4, from Speed's *Chronicle* (1632), p. 1190.

[21] *Ballads from MSS* 2. 25. Williams dedicated his ballad to King James, saying that he wrote it "presentli vppon" Essex's death (p. 23).

[22] *Ibid.*, pp. 247-8.

And valiant Essex this bold challenge sent
As combatant in his great soveraigne's name,
To know who durst of noble borne descent,
Stand forth amongst the rest to fight for fame,
And trie by blows the cause, for which they came;
Of if by eight to eight, or ten to ten,
Durst tempt their fate in fight like valiant men.

But through th' Iberian Armie not a man
Stood forth as combatant in single fight.[23]

Essex's return to England called forth Peele's *Eclogue Gratulatorie,* in which were celebrated his deeds of chivalry:

And of his dread adventures here sing I
Equivalent with the Punic chivalry,
That brake his lance with terror and renown
Against the gates of slaughtered Remus' town;
Iö, iö Paean!
And was the first of many thousands more
That at Penichia waded to the shore:
There couth he lead his landed flock so far
Till 'a was left of men approved in war.[24]

Essex's expedition to France, likewise, was conducted in the spirit of chivalry. Cayet's *Chronologie Nouvemaire* is filled with references to chivalric compliments and exchanges between Essex and Henry IV. When Essex's brother, Walter Devereux, was killed at the siege of Rouen, the gentlemen of the Earl's bodyguard engaged in a chivalric contest with the opposing forces for the body of the slain warrior. And at this same siege Essex sent another of his challenges to single combat. He challenged Villars, Governor of Rouen, in the following manner: "Si vous voulez combattre vous même à cheval ou à pied, je mainteindra que le querelle du Roi est plus juste que celle de la Ligue, et que ma Maîtresse est plus belle que la votre." [25] This

[23] *England's Eliza,* stanzas 317-8, *Mirrour for Magistrates,* part 5.

[24] *An Eclogue. Gratulatorie. Entituled: To the right honorable and renowned Shepheard of Albions Arcadia: Robert Earle of Essex and Ewe, for his welcome into England from Portugall. Done by George Peele, Maister of Arte in Oxon. . . . 1589.* Reprinted in Bullen's *Peele* 2. 267 ff., lines 138-146.

Essex's part in this expedition is the main interest in the prose tract entitled: *A True Coppie of a Discourse Written by a Gentleman employed in the late Voyage of Spain and Portingale . . . 1589.* The earl's deeds are praised very highly and especially his challenge "to meet any singly, or six, eight, ten, or more on each side." From J. P. Collier's *Bibliographical Account* 1. 317-9.

[25] Quoted by Devereux 1. 273, from *Mém. de Sully* 1. 312.

and Essex's other actions were detailed for English readers by Coningsby in his *Journal of the Siege of Rouen.*[26]

That this love of chivalry was not merely a boyish affectation is shown by our hero's actions in his campaign against Tyrone in the North. Essex had pursued the rebel leader for days without being able to force him to do battle. Finally, despairing of ever bringing the two armies together, he sent Tyrone a challenge to single combat. He proposed to meet the Irish leader at a middle point between the two armies, and there themselves decide the issue. So, Essex's affection for chivalric principles is evidenced not only by his prominence on the tilt yard, but also by his conduct in actual warfare. It was this part of Essex's character that Spenser had in mind when he celebrated him as " Faire branch of Honor, flower of Cheualrie."

Since, then, the practice of chivalry was an important part of the education of a courtier, and since *courtiership* was synonymous with *courtesy,* my Lord of Essex, in this important respect, was the protagonist of courtesy.

Athletic Sports

Another important item in the training of the courtier was athletic sports. In this respect, de Sélincourt in his introduction to the one volume *Oxford Spenser,* although he agrees with Long that certain touches in the character of Calidore may have been suggested by Essex, thinks that " its general conception fits far better with Sidney." He adds: " Among other corroborative details it is worth noting, as Mr. J. C. Smith points out to me, that Sir Calidore is distinguished from the other faerie knights by the emphasis laid on his prowess as a *runner* and a *wrestler.*" [27] Athletic sports were a part of the training of the courtier and are treated as such by every writer on the " new Humanistic Education " from Rabelais to Spenser. Lord Essex was famed as an athlete. The descriptions of him picture him as such. Sir Henry Wotton tells us that he was " able bodied, tall, and stooping a little from the shoulders." [28] Likewise, Signor Francesco Gardenigo described him as " about

[26] *Camden Miscellany* 1 (Publication of the Camden Society, O. S. 39).
[27] P. liii. Cf. P. W. Long's review, *MLR* 10. 111-2.
[28] *Reliq. Wot.,* pp. 174-5.

twenty-six years of age, fair-skinned, tall, but wiry." [29] Sir Thomas Coningsby relates in his *Siege of Rouen* incidents in which Essex showed his athletic ability. He tells us that on August 22: "This eveninge . . . the kinge with his nobles would neades leape, where our lord generall did overleape them all." [30] And of his strength in general he says: "The 17 My lord wente early to the kinges quarter, being only accompanied with 4 of us, for such a body hath he made of yron, supporting travaile and passioned in all extremyties, that following him did tyre our bodies, that are made of flesh and boane." [31] Cayet records in his *Chronologie Nouvemaire,* among other deeds, that Essex spent three days before Noyon engaged in sports. For this he was censured by the Queen. In regard to athletic sports, then, Essex was well qualified for the place of the ideal courtier.

Poet and Scholar

The perfect courtier was a complete man—he combined the active with the contemplative life. It is a constant source of wonder for the modern student that the Elizabethan courtier should have combined these nowadays hostile ideals. Men like Essex found time and inclination not only for attendance on the Queen as gallants of the court, but also for serious business. Moreover, the serious side of their lives was also divided into two parts—one had to do with affairs of state, wars, voyages, business ventures, and the like; the other was devoted to study, to writing, and to the encouraging of men of talent. Although we today are not accustomed to think of Essex as a poet and scholar, his reputation as such, especially in his early years, was widely celebrated among his contemporaries. In this respect, Sir Henry Wotton, Essex's friend and companion, says of him:

> The Earl was of good Erudition . . . was a very acute and sound speaker, when he would attend to it; and for his writings, they are beyond example, especially in his familiar letters and things of delight at court, when he would admit his serious habits, as may be seen in his impressas and Inventions of entertainment, and above all in his darling piece of love, and self-love; his stile was an elegant

[29] *Loc. cit.*
[30] P. 18.
[31] P. 44.

perspicuity, rich of phrase, but seldom any bold metaphors; and so far from Tumer, that it rather wanted a little elevation.[32]

And in another place Wotton describes the occasion of one of Essex's sonnets:

> There was another time long after when Sir Fulke Greville (late Lord Brook) a man in appearance intrinsical with him, or at least admitted to his melancholy hours, either belike espying some wearinesse in the Queen, or perhaps (with little change of the word, though more in danger) some wariness towards him; and working upon the present matter (as he was dexterous and close) had almost super-induced into favour the Earl of Southampton; which yet being timely discovered, my Lord of Essex to evaporate his thoughts in a Sonnet (being his common way) to be sung before the Queen, (as it was) by one Hales, in whose voice she took some pleasure, whereof the complot, methinks had as much of the Hermit as of the Poet.
>
> And if thou should'st by her now be forsaken
> She made thy Heart too strong for to be shaken.[33]

Ben Jonson, another famous contemporary, includes Essex in his *Scriptorum Catalogue*: "The Earle of Essex, noble and high; and Sir Walter Raleigh, not to be contemn'd either for judgement, or stile."[34] In a marginal note he mentions Essex in company with Sidney, Hooker, Saville, etc., and in his *Conversations with Drummond* he says: "Essex wrotte that Epistle or preface before the translation of y^e^ last part of Tacitus which is A. B."[35] The reference here is, of course, to Sir Henry Saville's translation of Tacitus, published in 1591. Edmund Bolton in his *Hypercritica* repeats Jonson's statement and mentions Saville as the author. He says: "And of such works the Earl of Essex under the letters A. B. (for Fames [*sic*] gives it him) in an Epistle before the translated Tacitus of his friend *Sir Henry Savil*."[36] Essex himself in his *Apology* called Sir Henry to witness his love of learning in his younger years.[37] It

[32] *Reliq. Wot.*, pp. 172-4. Ben Jonson in his *Conversations with Drummond* mentions Essex's impressas. See also Camden's *Remaines* (1614), pp. 218-226 and Henry Peacham's *Minerva Britannia* (1612), p. 81.

[33] *Op. cit.*, p. 165.

[34] *Timber or, Discoveries* (1641), Bodley Head Quartos 5. 37-8.

[35] Hereford and Simpson, *Works* 1. 142.

[36] Quoted from p. 242 by Hereford and Simpson 1. 167.

[37] *An Apologie of the Earle of Essex; Against those that jealously and Maliciously tax him to be the Hinderer of the Peace and Quiet of his Country. Penned by*

is indeed significant that Essex himself should refer to his devotion to learning in his early years as argument " against those which jealously and maliciously tax him to be the Hinderer of the Peace and Quiet of his Country."

Edmund Bolton refers to the *Apologie* in his *Hypercritica*:

That tractate which goeth under the name of the Earl of Essex his apology, was thought by some to be Mr. *Antony Bacon's*: but as it bears that E. Name, so do I also think it was the Earl's own, as also his advices to *Roger* Earl of Rutland; then which nothing almost can be more honourably utter'd, nor more to the writer's praise, so far as belongs to a noble English oratour.[38]

Gabriel Harvey, Spenser's intimate friend and correspondent, speaks of Essex as a writer:

Not manie Chawcers, or Lidgates, Gowers, Occleves, Surries, or Heywoods in those dayes: & how few Aschams, or Phaers, Sidneys, or Spensers, Warners or Daniels, Silvesters, or Chapmans in this pregnant age. But when shall we tast the preserved dainties of Sir Edward Dier, Sir Walter Raleigh, M. Secretarie Cecill, the new patron of Chaucer [Speght's *Chaucer* was dedicated to Cecil]; *the Earle of Essex,* the King of Scotland, the soveraine of the divine art; or a few other refined wittes & surprising spirits.[39]

In the margin Harvey wrote: " The rare spirits of this age."

On Oct. 20, 1598, John Chamberlain sent some verses to his

Himself in anno 1593. London 1603. Imprinted by R. Bradocke. In 1600, after Essex's first trial, a book was published which purported to be Essex's " Apologie," but Essex denied that it bore any resemblance to what he had written. He himself notified the Archbishop of Canterbury to have the book called in. On May 10, 1600, Archbishop Whitgift wrote to Sir Robert Cecil the following account of the suppression of the book:

" Yesterday in the afternoon, Mr. Cuffe, the Earl of Essex man, came home from his Lord unto me to signify of this book which I send to you . . . 292 copies have been printed. . . . Whereof I have gotten into my hands 210 or thereabouts and hope to have the rest sometime today." (*Cecil MSS* 10. 142-3.)

On May 28, 1600, John Chamberlain wrote to his friend Dudley Carleton that Lady Rich had been called before the council to explain her letter " in the end " of Essex's " Apologie lately printed." (*Letters of John Chamberlain,* p. 76, letter 29.) Since Lady Rich's letter is not in the 1603 edition of the *Apologie* in the Library of Congress, and since I have been unable to find any allusion to her letter in any account of the 1603 edition, I conclude that the 1603 version is a different treatise, probably the authentic one. I have not been able, however, to locate either a copy or an account of a copy of the 1600 edition. Whitgift probably succeeded in rounding up all 292 copies, and, consequently, left none for bibliographical purposes.

[38] P. 234. Quoted from Hereford and Simpson 1. 167.

[39] *Marginalia,* ed. G. C. Moore-Smith (1913), p. 231. Italics mine.

friend Dudley Carleton with the following comment: "I have sent you some verses that go under the name of the Lord of Essex when he was in disgrace, but I cannot warrant them to be his, nor made at that time." [40]

Moreover, in 1595, one year before the publication of the Sixth Book of the *Faerie Queene*, Essex presented a device to the Queen on Coronation Day in which he referred to his love of learning. In the tilt yard he was met by a hermit, a secretary of state, and an esquire. They sought to move this worthy knight to "leave his vain following of love" and to embrace their respective professions. The hermit represented the life of a scholar, and the secretary was that "domestical greatness" which Bacon and his other friends counselled him to strive to attain and to which quest he devoted his time from his return from France until 1596. But the esquire answered them all by saying that "this knight would never forsake his Mistress' love." [41]

Just as it is easily demonstrated that the part played by the secretary had a basis in fact, so will I show that the hermit, the emblem of learning, also was drawn from events in the Earl's life. In 1576, at the age of nine, young Robert Devereux was described as a master of the Latin and French languages. Soon after he demonstrated his knowledge of Latin by writing to Lord Burghley a letter in good Latin prose. In 1577 at the age of ten he entered Trinity College, Cambridge. Among his tutors there was Dr. John Whitgift, afterward Archbishop of Canterbury. On July 6, 1581, at the age of fourteen, he was created Master of Arts. Soon after he retired to his house at Lanfey in Pembrokeshire and devoted his time to study until he was brought to court in 1584 by the Earl of Leicester. It is said, however, by his contemporary and biographer, Sir Robert Naunton, that he showed great aversion to the court and would have liked better to remain with his studies in the country. After his introduction at court, therefore, he withdrew and again sought his studies. But in 1585 he accompanied Leicester to the Low Countries. Here, as before, the serious nature of the

[40] *Letters of John Chamberlain* (Camden Soc., O. S. 39), letter 9, p. 25.

[41] *Sidney Papers* 1. 362. The Squire's speech is reprinted in Devereux 2. app. F. Cf. also pp. 505-6.

young Earl showed itself. John Stow says of him in this respect:

Robert Devereux, Earle of Essex, being but ten yeares of age, at the death of his father, was for a time traynd up in the University, and in the Court. And at the age of nineteene, went into Flaunders, and there served against the Duke of Parma, being very forward in all actions, striving for knowledge, and experience in war and martiall discipline.[42]

And, as I have formerly pointed out, in his *Apology* in 1598, he directed Anthony Bacon to witness his affection for Sir Henry Saville and " your most rarely learned brother " as proof of his love of learning.

Peele in his *Anglorum Feriae* gives an account of Essex's device. His account begins:

> The first that led, in cheerful colours clad
> In innocent white and fair carnation,
> *Was he whose wisdom in his younger years*
> *And love to arms make him so far renown'd,*
> The noble earl of Essex and of Ewe.[43]

Anthony Wood records that in 1588,

Apr. 11 Rob Devereux Earl of *Essex* and master of the Horse to Queen Elizabeth, was incorporated M. of A. as he stood at Cambridge, being then accounted one of the best poets among the nobility of *England*, and a person adorned with singular gifts of nature.[44]

Thomas Warton says of Essex in this connection:

Coxeter says, that he had seen one of Ovid's Epistles translated by Robert Earl of Essex. This I have never seen; [Hazlitt adds note: " nor anybody else "] and if it could be recovered I trust it would only be valued as a curiosity. A few of his sonnets are in the Ashmolean Museum, which have no marks of poetic genius. He is a vigorous and elegant writer of prose. But if Essex was no poet, few noblemen of his age were more courted by poets. From Spenser to the lowest rhymer he was the subject of numerous sonnets, or popular ballads. I will not except Sidney. I can produce evidence to prove that he scarce ever went out of England, or even left Lon-

[42] *Annales*, p. 805.

[43] Quoted *ante*. Italics mine.

[44] *Fasti Oxonienses*. In the second vol. of 1721 ed. of the *Athenae*, p. 138, Wood mentions seven items as Essex's *Works*. For a complete list of Essex's writings, see the Coopers' *Athenae Cantabrigienses* 2. 300-1.

don, on the most frivolous enterprise, without a pastoral in his praise, or a panegyric in metre, which was sold and sung in the streets. Having interested himself in the fashionable poetry of the times, he was placed high in the ideal arcadia now just established: and among other instances which might be brought, on his return from Portugal in 1589, he was complimented with a poem, called, "An Egloge Gratulatorie, . . ." This is a light in which lord Essex is seldom viewed. I know not if the Queen's fatal partiality, or his inherent attractions, his love of literature, his heroism, integrity, and generosity, qualities which abundantly overbalance his presumption, his vanity, and impetuosity, had the greater share in dictating these praises. If adulation were anywhere justifiable, it must be paid to the man who endeavoured to save Spenser from starving in the streets of Dublin [London], and who burried him in Westminister-Abbey with becoming solemnity. Spenser was persecuted by Burleigh, because he was patronised by Essex.[45]

So, from this evidence it is quite clear that Essex was recognized by his contemporaries as fulfilling the requirements for the ideal courtier in respect to the contemplative life. It may be objected that his affection for learning and the contemplative life was merely a pose; but if it were, it was well carried out and constant throughout his life. As late as 1600, when he was in disgrace, he wrote in reply to Bacon's letter in which he excused himself for his actions at the trial:

Mr. Bacon,

I can neither expound nor censure your late actions, being ignorant of them all save one, and having directed my sight inward only to examine myself. You do pray me to believe that you only aspire to the conscience and commendation of *bonus civis* and *bonus vir*; and I do faithfully assure you that while that is your ambition (though your course be active and *mine contemplative*), yet we shall both *convenire in eodem tertio* and *convenire inter nos ipses*.

. . .

Your retired friend,
Essex.[46]

The Pastoral

Spenser makes his knight of courtesy a pastoral hero. My Lord of Essex fulfills the requirements for the ideal courtier not only in his affection for the contemplative life, but also in the

[45] *History of English Poetry*, ed. 1840, 3. 340-1.
[46] Abbott, *Bacon and Essex*, p. 183.

association of the pastoral with him, according to his high position in the " ideal arcadia now just established." Unfortunately, Warton did not mention the many pastorals that were written to celebrate Essex's goings and comings; but enough are extant to indicate the nature of those which are lost. The best known of these is Peele's *Eclogue Gratulatorie,* written in the conventional pastoral form as a dialogue between Palinode and Piers (characters from Spenser's *Shepherds Calendar*). Palinode opens the discussion by asking:

> Herdgroom what gars thy pipe to go so loud?
> Why bin thy looks so smiker and so proud?
> Perdy, plain Piers, but this couth ill agree
> With thilk bad fortune that age thwarteth thee.

To some further jibes of Palinode, Piers finally tells the subject of his song thus:

> Thou art a sour swain, Palinode, Perdy;
> My bag-pipe vaunteth not of victory;
> Then give me leave sonizance to make
> For chivalry and lovely learning's sake!
> Iö, iö, Paean!

And in the following stanza he explains the title, *An Eclogue, Gratulatorie, Entitled: To the right honorable and renowned Shepheard of Albions Arcadia: Robert Earle of Essex and of Ewe, for his Welcome into England from Portugall:*

> Of arms to sing I have nor lust nor skill;
> Enough is me to blazon my good-will,
> To welcome home that long hath lacked been,
> One of the jolliest shepherds of our green.

And in the next few stanzas he further describes the subject of his song as:

> Thilk shepherd, Palinode, whom my pipe praiseth,
> Whose glory my reed to welkin raiseth,
> He's a great herdgroom, certes, but no swain
> Save hers that is the folower of Phoebe's plain;
> Iö, iö Paean!
> He's well-allied and loved of the best,
> Well-thew'd, fair and frank, and famous by his crest
> His Rain-deer, rocking with proud and stately pace,
> Giveth to his flock a right beautiful grace;
> Iö, iö, Paean!

He waits where our great shepherdess doth wun,
He playeth in the shade, and thriveth in the sun;
He shineth on the plains, his lusty flock him by,
As when Apollo kept in Arcady;
Iö, iö Paean![47]

Then too, William Browne in his *Britannias Pastorals* (1625) gives the following description of Essex and his downfall. The Shepheard describes the "Vale of Woe":

Next him a great man sate, in woe no lesse;
Teares were but barren shadowes to expresse
The substance of his griefe, and therefore stood
Distilling from his heart red streames of blood:
He was a Swaine whome all the Graces kist,
A brave, heroicke, worthy *Martialist*:
Yet on the Downes he oftentimes was seene
To draw the Merry Maidens of the Greene
With his sweete voice; once, as he sate alone,
He sung the outrage of the lazy *Drone*,[48]
Vpon the lab'ring *Bee*, in straines so rare,
That all the flitting Pinnionists of ayre
Attentive sate, and in their kindes did long
To learne some Noat from his well-timed song. . . .

After the *Beares* just death, the quickening Sunne
Had twice six times about the Zodiacke run
And (as respectlesse) never cast an eye,
Vpon the night-invail'd *Cymmerii*,
When this brave Swaine (approved valorous)
In opposition, of a tyrannous
And bloody *Savage* being longtime gone
Quelling his rage with faithless *Gerion*
Returned from the stratagems of Warres,
(Inriched with his qual'd foes bootlesse scarres)
To see the cleare eyes of his dearest Love,
And that her skill in hearbs might help remove
The freshing of a wound which he had got
In her defence, *by Envies poyson'd shot*,
And coming through a Grove wherein his faire
Lay with her breasts displai'd to take the aire,
His rushing through the boughs made her arise,
And dreading some wild beasts enterprize,
Directs toward the noise a sharpened dart,
That reached the life of his undaunted heart,

[47] Bullen, pp. 275-6.
[48] Essex's poem, "The Buzzing Bees Complaint."

Which when she knew, twice twenty moones nie spent
In teares for him, and dy'd in languishment.[49]

Moreover, Essex's poems as well as his letters show him to have conformed to pastoral models and thoughts. In the *Buzzing Bees Complaint*, mentioned by Browne, said to have been written by Essex " in his first discontment," the pastoral note is evident.

It was a time when sillie Bees could speake,
And in that time I was a sillie Bee
Who suckt on time, vntill my heart gan breake,
Yet never found that time would favour me.
Of all the swarme, I onlie could not thrive,
Yet brought I wax and honey to the hive.[50]

The following is a poem said to have been sent by him to Elizabeth from Ireland:

Happy were he coulde finish forth his fate
In some unhaunted desert, most obscure
From all society, from love and hate
Of worldly folkes; there might he sleepe secure,
There wake again, and give God ever praise,
Content with hippes and hawes and brambel-berrie,
In contemplation passing still his days,
And change of holy thoughts to make him merrie;
That when he dies his tomb might be a bush
Where harmless Robin dwels with gentle thrush.[51]

Professor Greenlaw has pointed out that melancholy is a characteristic of the pastoral hero. In this respect Wotton tells us that Essex was " cogitative " by nature, of a close and reserved countenance, especially at meals. He " was wont to make this observation of himself . . . when he had checked his

[49] *The Whole Works of William Browne*, ed. W. Carew Hazlitt, printed for the Roxburghe Library, London, 1868, 1. 120-2. " Britannia's Pastorals " (Bk. 1, song 4).

[50] Printed in *Ballads from MSS* 2. 240 ff. and attributed to Cuffe under the title " A Poem made on the Earle of Essex (being in disgrace with Queene Eliz.) : by Mr. Cuffe his Secretary." However, reference is made to another copy in Add. MS. 5495, fol. 28 bk. which has the following title: " These verses were pend by Robert late Earle of Essex in his first discontment in the months of July and August."

[51] Printed in *Fuller Worthies Lib. Miscell.* (ed. A. B. Grosart) 5. 442-3, from Ashm. MS 781, p. 83, headed " certain verses made by my Lord Essex." Cf. Chetham MS 8012. In this miscellany Grosart has assembled and published all the available verses that have been attributed to Essex.

first appetite . . . he sate usually for a good while silent." [52] Rowland Whyte gossips of Essex's melancholy in 1596 thus:

. . . My Lord of Essex once againe doth keape his chamber, and saies he will goe into Wales. Truly, my Lord, he leades here a very unquiet Liffe. . . . For that man you writ about to 1000 [Earl of Essex] I doe not know what success it will take, seing him so indisposed with malincholy; . . . [53]

Spenser's Sir Calidore

Since the evidence in the preceding pages indicates that Essex was associated by his contemporaries with every phase of the ideal courtier, it is pertinent at this point to renew the question of his identification with Calidore, the knight of courtesy in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. The chief objection to such an identification is the fact that it is usual to see Sir Philip Sidney imaged in the courteous knight. The first to make the Sidney identification was Upton in 1758:

Methinks, by no far-fecht allusions, we might discover pictured out to us that truly courteous Knight Sir Philip Sidney, in the character of Sir Calidore; whose name . . . leads us to consider the many graceful and goodly endowments that heaven peculiarly gave him. This is that *brave courtier* mentioned by our poet in *Mother Hubberds Tale*:

> Yet the brave courtier, in whose beautious thought
> Regard of honour harbours—
> He will not creep, nor crouch with fained face,
> But walks upright with comely stedfast pace,
> And unto all doth yield due *Courtesie*.

With this hint given, who can help thinking of Sidney's Arcadia, when he finds Sir Calidore misspending his time among the Shepherds? And when this Knight of Courtesy meets in his pastoral retirement with Colin Clout, and by his abrupt appearance drives away the rural Nymphs and Graces, which makes the shepherd,

> for fell despight
> Of that displeasure, break his bag-pipe quite:

Do not all these circumstances, agreeably to the tenor of this Poem, allude to our poet's leaving the country, and the rural muse at Sir Philip Sidney's request. . . . [54]

G. L. Craik, in 1845, strengthened Upton's position by identi-

[52] *Op. cit.*, pp. 170-1.
[53] *Sidney Papers* 2. 22-3, "Rowland Whyte to Sir Robert Sidney, 28 Feb. 1596."
[54] *Spenser's Faerie Queene*, ed. J. Upton (1758) 2. 657.

fying Meliboe with Walsingham and Corydon with Thomas Watson.[55]

The first to dispute Upton's identification was Percy W. Long.[56] In his discussion, Long accepts Craik's identification of Meliboe, but he objects to that of Calidore. He thinks that Spenser means by Sir Calidore not Sidney but Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex. His reasons are as follows:

1. Calidore's physical strength corresponds more with Essex's strong body than with Sidney's slender frame.
2. Calidore is represented as no poet.
3. Calidore is represented as a great warrior. Essex's reputation in this respect was far greater than that of Sidney.
4. The wooing of Pastorella fits the courtship of Essex better than that of Sidney, for:
   (a) It is strictly contemporary with Meliboe's (Walsingham's) death.[57]
   (b) In the courtship, a disparity of social relations is insisted upon.
   (c) Colin Clout's lady-love was Elizabeth Carey. A conversation between Essex and Spenser on this subject is likely.

As I have indicated in the foregoing, Mr. Long's thesis has not met with favour among the Spenser scholars. He has not, however, made out so strong a case as he might. As I have pointed out, Essex, like Sidney, was looked upon as the ideal courtier. Moreover, Spenser's dedicatory sonnet to Essex in 1590 indicates not only that he intended to place that Earl in some future installment of his epic, but also that he was at that time making a bid for Essex's favour. That he looked upon Essex as a friend and patron in 1596 is evidenced by his high praise of him in his *Prothalamion* of that year.

[55] *Spenser and His Poetry* (London, 1845) 3. 74.

[56] "Spenser's Sir Calidore" in *Englische Studien* 42 (1910). 53-60.

[57] Long bases his statement on the fact that the first child from this union was born in 1591. The wedding was a secret one. Conyers Read in his *Life of Walsingham* (3. 170) cites a letter from Dr. William Gifford, an English Catholic refugee on the continent, to one of his friends in June, 1587, in which it is intimated that Essex married Lady Sidney before that date. The letter reads: "Secondly, because Walsingham has married his daughter Lady Sidney to. . . ." The last part of the sentence Read could not decipher. There can be no doubt that the allusion is to her second husband, the Earl of Essex. This fact, however, does not destroy Long's argument, for Essex was careful to conceal his wedding, and it is quite possible that Spenser thought of it as having taken place the year before the birth of a child caused it to be announced. Peele mentions Essex as Sidney's successor in love in his *Polyhymnia* (1590).

We should note here that Spenser in Book VI of the *Faerie Queene* would have been concerned with Essex's acts and reputation before 1596; anything after that date could not have influenced him. But the conception of Essex as "the rash Earl," the champion of rudeness is based on his actions (though wrongly still) of the 1597-1600 period. Essex's fame as the protagonist of courtesy was most widely celebrated at the very time that Spenser was writing the second installment of his epic—1590 to 1596, the time of the poet's visits to London. Then, too, Essex's paying the cost of the poet's funeral indicates that the Earl considered himself as Spenser's patron. So, we are safe in assuming that at the time of the publication of the Sixth Book, Spenser was an admirer and friend of Essex. He would, therefore, have viewed him very much in the same light as did Peele and the many other admirers mentioned in the first part of this paper.

As I have shown, all the characteristics of Calidore may be applied to Essex. The most strongly suggestive of Sidney is, of course, the pastoral episode. Essex was not only celebrated in pastorals but also wrote pastoral poetry of his own. His love of the country and the retired life, likewise, make him a fit subject for the pastoral. In this connection it has been said that the *Arcadia* is the "prose counterpart" of the *Faerie Queene* and that the resemblance is best seen in the Calidore-Pastorella episode.[58] I have shown that the pastoral was usually associated with courtiership. Its use by Spenser, then, in Book Six was not only natural but imperative. Moreover, it should be mentioned that practically every pastoral written after the publication of Sidney's *Arcadia* owed something to that work—no matter what the application might be. Essex, as we see from Peele's Eclogue, was ranked high in that "Ideal Arcadia," which had its origin and conception in that of Sidney. Therefore, Spenser's Calidore-Pastorella episode is his ideal Arcadia. Like Peele's it owes its conception to Sidney, but like Peele's its application is a timely one, and it relates to the perfect courtier in the time in which it was published. In this connection, it should be noted that Essex was in high favour with the Queen from 1587 until

[58] E. Greenlaw, "Shakespeare's Pastorals" in *Studies in Philology* 13 (1916). 122-154; and "Sidney's Arcadia as an Example of Elizabethan Allegory" in *Kittredge Anniversary Papers* (Boston, 1913), pp. 327-337.

about 1597. Anthony Bagot wrote to his father in May 1587: " When she is abroad, nobody near her but M. L. of Essex; and at night, my Lord is at cards, or one game or another with her, that he cometh not to his own lodgings till the birds sing in the morning." [59] And when Elizabeth called him back from France, she wept and begged him to keep himself out of harm's way. Calidore, we remember is " beloved over all." Moreover, he is most complete knight of all; he is the ideal courtier. Essex was praised as " Minervas foe daunting shield: Of Mars conquering honor: Of the courts loadstarre: Of Englands Scipio: Of France his ayde: Of fames glory: Of the muses eldest sonne: Of Ornament: Of Vertues Miracle: Of religions champion: of thrice honorable & worthilie-worthie-honored-noble-Essex." [60] And in the dedication to the same work his virtues are summed up in a way that suggests the character of Calidore:

> Your honour (be it spoken without envie) like England's cedar is *sprung up to preserve with your shadowe, the humblest in all professions, from hatred's malice.* The warlike and brave soldier thinkes himself (and that in truth is) graced, to be tearmed but your follower. The worthy and kind passionate courtier deemes (and worthily) this is honor to bee your favourite. The sober and devout student that despised doth walke melancholy, takes himselfe (and not without cause) fortunate to be tearmed your schollar.[61]

It was in this light that Spenser and his contemporaries viewed Essex in 1595-6. His identification with Calidore was, therefore, almost inevitable.

It may be objected, however, that Book V closes with an account of Lord Grey in Ireland, and that the main events in the book are of the time between 1580 and 1586. Consequently, Book VI should come in that period; it presents a different aspect of the reign for the same period. If Spenser wrote about the ideal courtier in 1585, he certainly meant Sidney. Of the truth of this last statement I have no doubt. But Spenser in Book V, by inserting the Bourbon incident, makes his story bear on conditions immediately contemporary. So, the Irena episode refers not only to Grey but also to Essex.[62] Such, then, is the

[59] Devereux 1. 135-6.

[60] " W. C.," dedicatory letter to *Polimanteia* (1595), in Brydges' *British Bibliographer* 1. 275.

[61] *Ibid.*

[62] To be treated in a forthcoming paper.

case in Book VI. When Spenser first thought of writing about the ideal courtier, he no doubt had Sidney in mind; but when he actually wrote the book, he made it bear on Essex—he gave it a timely interest. This was not hard to accomplish, for Essex was looked upon by his contemporaries as the successor to Sidney. This fact is pointed out not only by the evidence in the preceding pages, but also by the following definite statements. Peele in his *Eclogue Gratulatorie* says of his shepherd, Essex:

> Fellow in arms he was in their flowering days
> With that great Shepherd, good Philisides;
> And in sad sable did I see him dight,
> Moaning the miss of Pallas' peerless knight. . . .
>
> But, ah for grief! that jolly groom is dead,
> For when the muses silver tears have shed;
> *Yet in this lovely swain, source of our glee,*
> *Mun all his virtues sweet reviven be.*
> Io, io, Paean.[63]

And in his *Polyhymnia* in 1590, he described Essex's device thus:

> Young Essex, that thrice honorable earl;
> Y-clad in mighty arms of mourners dye,
> And plume as black as in the raven's wing
> That from his armour borrowed such a light
> As boughs of yew receive from shady stream:
> His staves were such, or of such hue at least,
> As are those banner staves that mourners bear;
> And all his company in funeral black;
> As if he mourned to think of him he missed,
> Sweet Sidney, fairest shepherd of our green,
> *Well-letter'd warrior, whose successor he*
> *In love and arms had ever vowed to be:*
> *As his deserts, as his desires would speed!* [64]

In the same vein is the dedication to *Hypnerotomachia*, signed by "R. D." in 1592. It reads:

> To the Right Honourable Robert Deuorax, Earle of Essex and Ewe . . . is wished the perfection of all hapinesse, and tryumphant felicitie in his life, and in the worlde to come.
>
> When I had determined (Right honorable) to dedicate this Booke, to the everlyuing vertues of that matchlesse knight Syr Phillip Sydney; me thought that I could not finde out a more

[63] *Op. cit.*, pp. 272-3. Italics mine.

[64] Bullen 2. 292. The phrase "In love" seems to suggest that Peele knew of Essex's marriage as early as 1590. Italics mine.

Noble personage then your selfe, and more fit, to patronize, shield, and defende my dutie to the deade, then your Honour, whose greatness is such, and vertues of tha power, as who so commendeth them, deserveth not to be accounted a flatterer, but he that doth not the same, may be thought an evill willer. . . .[65]

Essex was, therefore, quite definitely considered as the successor to Sidney, and any praise that would have fallen to Sidney in 1585 would naturally have been applied to Essex in 1595-6.

In addition to those already mentioned by Long, however, there are several points in Calidore's character which point more directly to Essex than to Sidney. Let us notice the description of Calidore:

> But mongst them all was none more courteous Knight,
> Then Calidore, beloued ouer all,
> In whom it seemes, that gentlenesse of spright
> And manners mylde were planted naturall:
> To which he adding comely guize withall,
> And gracious speach, did steal mens hearts away.[66]

With this compare Wotton's statement that Essex " was a very acute and sound speaker." [67] Bacon says in his *Apology* that he sought to dissuade the Queen from bringing Essex to a public trial in 1600:

. . . Nay I went further, for I told her, My Lord was an eloquent and well-spoken man, and besides his eloquence of nature or art, he had an eloquence of accident which passed them both—and therefore that when he should come to his answer for himself, I doubted his words would have so unequal passages above theirs that should charge him, as would not be for her Majesty's honour.[68]

This eloquence of Essex's doubtless explains the fact that the Queen and her Council sought to restrain Essex from presenting his case from the scaffold at his execution. They feared the weight of his words with the populace, for he had the power to " steal men's hearts away."

Calidore, we remember also, is represented as staying in the country,

[65] *Hypnerotomachia, The Strife of Love in a Dreame* (1592), reprinted by Andrew Lang (London, 1890).

[66] *Faerie Queene* 6. 1. 2.

[67] *Op. cit.*, p. 172.

[68] *Sir Francis Bacon His Apology*, etc. Reprint in Abbott, *Bacon and Essex*, appendix 1. ii.

Vnmindful of his vow and high beheast,
Which by the Faery Queene was on him layd
That he should never leaue, nor be delayd.[69]

The desertion of the court for the simple life of the country is, of course, a pastoral convention. But in the case of Essex it seems to have been his sincere desire to withdraw himself from the court and lead a retired life in the country. Sir Henry Wotton, Essex's sometime secretary, tells us:

Always certain it is, that he [Leicester] drew him first into the fatal circle from a kind of resolved privateness at his house at *Lampsie*, in *South-Wales*; Where, after the Academical life, he had taken such a taste of the rural, as I have heard him say (and not upon any flashes or fumes of melancholy, or traverses of discontent, but in a serene and quiet mood) that he could well have bent his mind to a retired course.[70]

And in another place, Wotton tells us that Essex made, while out of favour, the following lines to be sung before the Queen:

And if thou shouldst by her now be forsaken
She made thy Hart too strong for to be shaken

On this poem Wotton has the following comment: "As if he had been casting one eye back at the least to his former retiredness." [71]

Essex's habit of absenting himself from court is well known. His first escapade of this nature came soon after his introduction when he is said to have been disgusted with the life there and to have gone back to the country. He was, however, again installed at court, this time as the Queen's favourite, on his return from the Low-Countries. His next running away was in 1589. Camden describes it:

Robert Earl of Essex fell among them [Drake and Norris's expedition], who being very young, had out of the heat of military glory, hatred against the Spaniards and commiseration for Don Antonio, *despising the pleasures of the court*, committed himselfe to sea, without the Queen's knowledge, yea to the incurring of her displeasure.[72]

Frequently, during the years following, this Lord withdrew him-

[69] *Faerie Queene* 6. 10. 1.
[70] *Reliq. Wot.*, p. 161, "Parallel between Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex and George Villiars, Duke of Buckingham."
[71] *Op. cit.*, pp. 165-6.
[72] William Camden, *Annales* (London, 1630), Bk. 4, p. 8. Italics mine.

self into the country when his wishes were not granted by Elizabeth. Essex himself expresses his distaste for court life in a letter to Sir Henry Unton, July 15, 1595. He tells Unton that Cecil has not done anything about his case and that he would undertake it himself: " But I am so handled by this crew of sycophants, spies, and delators, as I have no quiet myself nor much credit to help my friends. Perhaps once in a year I shall cry quittance with them." [73]

Let us compare this love of " the rural " and the retired life on Essex's part with Calidore's speech to old Meliboe:

> And drawing thence his speech another way,
> Gan highly to commend the happie life
> Which Shepheards lead, without debate or bitter strife.
>
> How much (sayd he) more happie is the state,
> In which ye father here doe dwell at ease,
> Leading a life so free and fortunate,
> From all the tempests of these wordly seas,
> Which tosse the rest in daungerous disease;
> Where warre, and wreckes, and wicked enmitie
> Doe them afflict, which no man can appease,
> That certes I your happinesse enuie,
> And wish my lot were plast in such felicitie.[74]

In connection with Essex's habit of absenting himself from court, let us notice that his courtship of Walsingham's daughter was secret and, therefore of necessity, performed away from court. Calidore, likewise, fell in love with Pastorella during his unwarranted absence from his quest. Calidore's marriage is represented as taking place soon after Meliboe's death. Walsingham died in 1590 and Essex's marriage is usually placed in that same year, though Conyers Read has discovered evidence that the marriage took place before June 1587. Whatever the date of the marriage, Essex certainly courted and married Lady Sidney secretly and away from the court. When the birth of a child in 1591 made the announcement of the wedding necessary, the Queen's anger knew no bounds. In order to placate her, Essex had to agree that his wife would live in retirement away from court. He, however, returned to his royal mistress. With these facts let us compare the events which took place after the marriage of Calidore and Pastorella:

[73] *Cecil MSS* 5. 280.

[74] *Faerie Queene* 6. 9. 18-9.

Then gan Sir Calidore him to aduize
Of his first quest, which he had long forlore,
Asham'd to think, how he that enterprize,
The which the Faery Queene had long afore
Bequeath'd to him, forelacked had so sore;
That much he feared, least reproachful blame
With foule dishonour him mote blot therefore;
Besides the losse of so much loos and fame,
As through the world thereby should glorifie his name.

Therefore resoluing to returne in hast
Vnto so great atchieuement, he bethought
To leaue his loue, now perill being past,
With *Claribell*, whylest he that monster sought
Throughout the world, and to destruction brought.
So taking leaue of his faire Pastorell,
Whom to recomfort, all the meanes he wrought,
With thanks to *Bellamour* and *Claribell*,
He went forth on his quest, and did, that him befell.

But first, ere I doe his aduentures tell,
In this exploite, me needeth to declare,
What did betide to the faire Pastorell.
During his absence left in heauy care
Through daily mourning and nightly misfare.[75]

Moreover, there are several incidents in this book which fit well into the history of Essex but which are not at all related to that of Sidney. The first of these is the rescue of Serena from the Blatant Beast by Calidore.[76] This incident is usually interpreted as referring to Raleigh's affair with his future wife. De Sélincourt accepts this interpretation, but in the same paragraph identifies Calidore with Sidney.[77] This is, of course preposterous; if Timias is Raleigh, Calidore cannot be Sidney. Raleigh's liason with his future wife, Mistress Thockmorton, and its ensuing scandal took place in 1593. Sidney died in 1586. Now, I am perfectly aware of the fact that Spenser is not always consistent in his allegory. But I see no reason for our deliberate reading of inconsistencies into the allegory, when there is no need for it. Although the scandal about Raleigh is better known today than any other of the period, it is by no means the only one that received great attention at the time. In 1595, wide publicity was given to a bit of scandal caused by Southampton's amour with Elizabeth Vernon, a cousin to Essex. The gossip

[75] *Faerie Queene* 6. 12. 12-4.
[76] *Faerie Queene* 6. 3-6.
[77] Introduction to *Oxford Spenser*, p. liii.

was widely circulated and both Elizabeth Vernon's and Lord Southampton's reputations were seriously impaired by the scandal. My Lord of Essex was the man who finally straightened it out and caused the wagging tongues to cease. His part in the affair was generally known and discussed.[78] The Serena episode could well be interpreted, and probably was, in 1596, thus: Essex (Calidore) aids Southampton (Calepine) and Elizabeth Vernon (Serena), who has been bitten by scandal (the Blatant Beast). Serena, we must remember, is Calepine's lady, not that of Timias. Raleigh may be imaged in Timias, but his wife could not be Serena.

Spenser makes an easy and apparent transition from Book V, the legend of Justice to Book VI, the quest of Sir Calidore, the knight of Courtesy. In the last canto of the fifth book he ends his account of Artegall with an incident of the Blatant Beast. Artegall, who had accomplished the rescue of Irena, was called back to court, and " of necessity his course of Justice he was forst to stay." On his way back, however, he was met first by two hags, one of which was Envy and the other Detraction. These two hags, after they had bitten and reviled him, set on him the Blatant Beast.

> Thereto the Blatant Beast by them set on
> At him began aloud to barke and bay,
> With bitter rage and fell contention,
> That all the woods and rockes nigh to that way,
> Began to quake and tremble with dismay;
> And all the aire rebellowed againe.
> So dreadfully his hundred tongues did bray,
> And euermore those hags themselves did paine,
> To sharpen him, and their owne cursed tongs did straine.[79]

In this last canto, then, it is quite clear that Spenser blames envy, detraction, and slander (the Blatant Beast) for the failure of Lord Grey and subsequent commanders to settle finally the Irish question. In his *Veue of the Present State of Ireland*, the prose counterpart of Book V, he directly attributes the failures of Elizabeth's various commanders in Ireland to slanders of envious persons both in Ireland and back home at court. For that very reason, then, he advocates the creation of a Lord Lieutenant, who by virtue of his high office and position at

[78] Devereux 1. 474-5, from *Sidney Memoirs*.

[79] *Faerie Queene* 5. 12. 41.

court will be out of reach of these foul hags and their cowardly beast. This Lord Lieutenant would, therefore, overcome the loathsome creatures. The only person who could accomplish this quest was, in Spenser's mind, Lord Essex. He plainly pointed to Essex in the *Veue*, and, as I have shown in another place, connected Essex with Ireland in Book V of the *Faerie Queene*. The quest of Sir Calidore, the hero of the sixth book, is the pursuit of this same Blatant Beast. Therefore, if Essex is given the task of subduing the beast in Irish affairs, we have good reason to suppose that he is given the quest of that beast in Book Six.

Although de Sélincourt questions Ben Jonson's statement to Drummond that by the "Bleating beast" the Puritans were understood, he explains the capture of the beast thus:

> . . . There can be little doubt that in canto XII, where the beast is found despoiling a monastery, Spenser attacks the iconoclasm of the extreme Puritan; but the Blatant Beast stands for a great deal more than mere iconoclasm. There is no sound ground for assuming that Spenser ever changed his mind as to the value of the ideal for which the better Puritans stood. It is truer to say that whilst his ideal remained the same the Puritan party developed in practice tendencies with which as a poet and thinker he could have no sympathy. And this is indeed suggested by the fact that Sir Calidore, who catches the Blatant Beast at his iconoclasm, is a portrait of Sidney, the former leader of the Puritan Party.[80]

Essex, however, fits far better in this incident than Sidney, for he was an outstanding advocate of religious toleration in that age of rabid intolerance. This fact is well brought out in the events of his later life. For example, on Sept. 4, 1597, George Leslie, a Scottish Catholic, sent the following report back to a Mr. Browne:

> The hail nobilitie heir speik honorablie and seem well effectit to the Erle of Essex. Gif he sul interpois himself as one arbritor I feir me he will gang far and cast our cause mekill back. He is accomptit heir mair myld, nobill, temporat, and weill condisionat than tha Trasourar, albeit fast to his faction yet not bludie, cruel and conscienceles, but that he could be content to let pure catholickes have some oversycht sa that he myght be sure of the same swinge and swy in courte and cuntrey he has for the present.[81]

Camden tells us that as early as 1594 the Papists began to "cast their eyes vpon the Earl of Essex (who never approved

[80] *Op. cit.*, p. liii.

[81] *Salisbury MSS* 14. 22.

the putting of men to death in the cause of Religion)." [82] Then, too, one of the main charges against Essex in both his trials was that he sought popularity by appearing to be a friend to all religious factions. In this respect, Sir Christopher Blount, in answer to a question, testified at his trial: " . . . The Earl did give him comfort that if he came to authority there should be toleration of religion. He was wont to say that he did not like that any man be troubled for his religion." [83]

Who, then, could more appropriately have caught the Blatant Beast at his iconoclasm than my Lord of Essex, the outstanding champion of religious freedom? So, Spenser, just as he had pointed to Essex as the only man to overcome the beast in Irish affairs, pictures him here as the check to religious bigotry.

But let me hasten to repeat that I do not contend that Spenser meant to equate Calidore with Essex throughout the book. Nor do I mean to say that Spenser's fundamental conception of the ideal courtier was based on Essex to the exclusion of all others. Had he written of the virtue of courtesy in 1580-90 he would undoubtedly have taken Sidney as a model. But that he did not do; the legend of Sir Calidore was written between 1590 and 1596. The whole matter may be summed up thus: Spenser in Book VI celebrated one of the virtues associated with Elizabeth's reign—courtesy or courtiership. But his description of that virtue was colored by the then living embodiment of it—Essex.

By including Essex in the character of Sir Calidore, then, Spenser has fulfilled his promise " To make more famous memory of [his] heroicke parts." He has presented to his readers that Earl as he was seen by his friends and admirers—as the type of chivalry, as a poet and patron of poets, as a man of learning and friend of learned men, as the lover and husband of one far below him in social status, as the friend to all in every walk of life, as the noble warrior, as the passionate lover of the country and the retired life, as the subject of pastorals and the writer of pastorals, as the melancholy shepherd, as the champion of religious toleration, as the Ideal Courtier best beloved by Queen and people.

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[82] *Annales* (1635), p. 428.

[83] *CSP, Dom.* (1598-1601), pp. 578-9.

VITA

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